

## Abstract

Social relationships and attitudes are interrelated. Relationships and attitudes of children towards adults form the basic foundation for child development in all aspects e.g. physical, emotional, social and cognitive. This study surveys the patterns of relationships and attitudes of Thai Muslim children towards both young (25 - 60) and old adults (60 - up). The children studied are 6 - 12 years of age (late childhood) from 4 parts of the country : north, the four provinces (Satul, Yala, Pattanee, Narathivas), Bangkok, and south. Attitudes in this study are limited to ten variables : good - bad, sad - happy, right - wrong, terrific - terrible, beautiful - ugly, friendly - unfriendly, clean - dirty, rich - poor, healthy - sickly, helpful - unhelpful.

The purposes of this study are to investigate : (1) relationships and attitudes of Thai Muslim children towards young and old adults as a whole group; (2) differences of 10 variables of children's attitudes towards young and old adults; (3) differences of relationships and attitudes of 4 regional groups of children towards young and old adults; (4) correlations between children's attitudes and some demographic variables : existence of old adults in household, frequency of mosque attendance, frequency of praying, and involvement in activities with old people.

Hypotheses in this study are : (1) there are differences in attitudes towards young and old adults of all groups of Muslim children; (2) there are differences in attitudes towards young and old adults in each group of Muslim children; (3) attitudes of Muslim

children towards young and old adults in those ten variables differ; (4) there are correlations between some demographic variables and attitudes towards young and old adults.

Subjects in this study are 574 Muslim children. The instrument used in this study is the Semantic Differential Subtest. The reliability and validity are explained thoroughly in Jantz, Seefeldt, Galper and Serock (1980). Data collection is done in various places. The data are analyzed by descriptive statistics, paired comparison T test, F test and Pearson correlation.

Results in this study show slight differences in patterns of relationships and attitudes of 4 groups of Thai Muslim children towards young and old adults. These differences are probably due to the different life styles and folk cultures of each group of Thai Muslims rather than the Thai Muslim culture in itself. Surprisingly, strong similarities are discovered between north and Bangkok Muslims ; and between the four provinces and south Muslims. Thai Muslim children of the whole group show more positive relationships and better attitudes towards the old adults than young adults.

Results indicate close relationships among relatives of the Muslims of all groups but especially those in the south. A rather close-knit Muslim culture in Thailand is also found. This study does reflect a strong point of Thai society — a close integration of different Thai cultures. Probably, one reason for Thailand being an independent nation for a long time is due to such a mixture. Thai Muslim culture is fascinating, but has not yet been widely investigated. Research studies in other aspects of this culture are recommended.